

THE PROSPECT TOWER

Prospect United Methodist Church
A Growing Christian Community of Faith in Action

January 2015

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Pastor's Page

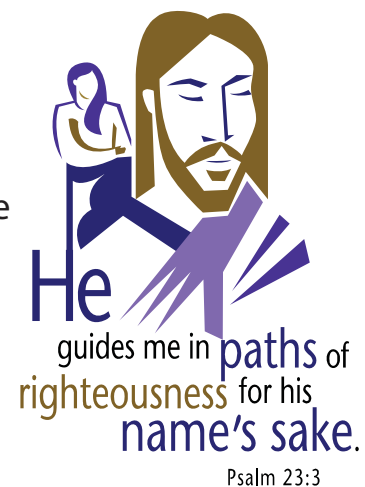
Winter Blues

It's cold outside and the last thing you want to do is leave your nice, warm home. The motion pictures at the movie theaters are awful. The mall is now empty but you've spent all your money on Christmas presents. Restaurants are all open, but the owners all seem to have cut back on their heating budget — and besides, you can't really taste your food when you're too busy shivering. What can you do?



Well, have I got an offer for you. How about taking a little time during the next few months and get a little closer to God? How about picking up a Bible and reading a few books in the weeks ahead? I have heard people say that they would like to grow spiritually, but they're so busy and they don't have time. Honestly, when the wind chill is a negative twelve degrees outside, wouldn't this be the perfect time to put a few logs on the fire, settle back into a comfortable chair and read?

So here are a few suggestions. In the Old Testament, the Book of Psalms is a wonderful book to read on a cold winter evening. The Psalms are sacred poetry which was written a few millennia ago. Yet, even though they are ancient, the messages they convey are timeless. They are brutally honest and reveal some very human emotions. But here's the really important part: as we read about the author's struggles to understand God, we can see our own struggle. Sometimes you will agree with the authors; sometimes you will be angry with them; I can promise you that you'll be enriched by the struggle and that you will grow closer to God.



My suggestion for the New Testament is the Gospel of Mark. We are in the Mark cycle for the readings on Sundays in our church services. In one sense, you will be getting bits and pieces every Sunday in church. But that can't take

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the place of reading it all the way through. Mark is a Gospel of action. You get to see Jesus interacting with people and hear his teachings in a dynamic and straightforward way. You can place yourself in the crowd that flocked to hear and to be touched by Jesus.

Winter in New England is never easy. But, winter can be a time when we grow. I believe that we all want to grow in our faith — are you ready to take the first step?

Grace and Peace,
Bob Sorozan

■ Giving Tree A Success

The spirit of Christmas traveled from members of our Congregation via our Covenant to Care for Children Giving Tree, then out the church door and into the car of the DCF Social Worker shortly before Christmas. It continued on its journey with the gifts brought to children in need in time for Christmas.

Susan Lee, the liaison to PUMC for Covenant to Care for Children (CCC) and also a board member of CCC, said, "Thank you so much for your generosity and caring for those children who have been through so much in their young lives. You have made a real difference." Tammy Pelletier assisted with this year's Giving Tree project.

■ Explorers Post Donated To Families, Children

Bristol Police Explorer Post 111 gave back to the community during the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons. Post 111 gave complete Thanksgiving dinners to 15 families, four of which were donated to families with Prospect ties. The remainder were donated to families throughout Bristol. Post 111 also held a toy drive at Walmart on Farmington Ave on December 3rd. The toys were donated to children in the Bristol community.

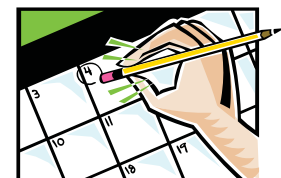
And he answered them, "Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and whoever has food is to do likewise."
~ Luke 3:11

While not affiliated with PUMC, Post 111 has volunteered at the DCYF Christmas Party held at Prospect for many years, and has also done yard work for the church. Prospect Church member Rita Fasci is an advisor to Post 111, and at December's Annual Meeting was named its Advisor of the Year.

The Bristol Police Explorers is an organization comprised of youths, ages 14-21, who are interested in the criminal justice field. The program provides members with an education of police work, basic medical training, team building exercises, and a sense of self-respect and discipline.

Police Explorers learn the duties of law enforcement officers from career fields as varied as Police Patrol, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Environmental Protection, Forensics, Emergency Dispatching, Military Police, as well as other aspects of law enforcement. When Explorers are not training, they have fun mountain biking, rock climbing and camping.

Calendar



January 25 - Woman of Prospect "Annual Chili Cook-Off"

January 25 - PUMC Book Club on "Orphan Train" by Christina Baker Kline

January 26 - Planning Meeting for "Storm Sandy Mission"

January 30 - Due Date for "Super Bowl Grinder Orders"

February 1 - Pick up Grinders

February 1 - PUMC Youth collecting soup for "Souper Bowl of Caring"

2014 WAS A BUSY YEAR FOR MIDDLE AGES GROUP

~Luisa Gladu, Chair of the Middle Ages Group

The Middle Ages Group added three new events to its very busy schedule for 2014.

May 3rd and May 10th kicked off the 2014 programs with the Annual Renaissance Dinners. Guests were treated to "A Celtic/Scottish Fling" and both dinners sold out. The food was great and guests were entertained with a unique rendition of the "Highland Games" that they may not soon forget.

A first for the group was participating in the "Relay for Life" walk on June 6th at Bristol Eastern High School. Many of the group members raised money for the American Cancer Society and walked in honor and in memory of church members, family and friends. Team Captain, Luisa Gladu was so proud of the support from the group and the entire "team" effort of PUMC members. The goal was to raise \$200 and the final count was \$2,000.

Another first for the group was to participate in the annual Bristol's Children's Christmas Parade on Federal Hill, held on Sunday, December 7th. This parade is very unique as the parade participants are stationary and the parade goes march the parade route. Group members wore their Renaissance and Victorian costumes and passed out candy canes and 400 flyers of upcoming events at PUMC.

The Annual Victorian Christmas Tea was held on Saturday, December 13th. Our doors were open to many guests from surrounding communities. Sessions Hall, the Library and Parlor were decorated in beautiful Victorian decorations. A new edition for 2014 was "Mrs. Pettigrew's Bakery," which sold many tasty treats. The "Drumming Deer Boutique" was open as well, selling ornaments, jewelry, hats, scarves, etc.

The third new event was Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, December 21st. Tickets quickly sold out in two weeks! Santa and Mrs. Claus were joined by Queen Elsa and Princess Anna from "Frozen." The children were amazed. Our guests not only had a tasty breakfast, but were entertained with a magic show, a story time featuring "Twas the Night Before Christmas" followed Christmas songs. They also made crafts, wrote a letter to Santa and then made their own reindeer food to take home. They also had their very own "Elf Mart" to shop for gifts throughout the morning. A very good time was had by all!

Not only did we raise funds for PUMC, but we took an active interest in the maintenance of our church home. One of our members has taken on the task of maintaining the gardens and property around the church. The group was able to purchase mulch and supplies to help him in

his progress and one of our church members contributed as well to the effort.

Working with the Trustees so that we stay in the historical guidelines for our building, we will talk about future projects to help refurbish the church, painting the outside doors, foundation etc. Middle Ages is looking forward to 2015 and hopes to continue to be a vital part of our church community. Our main focus is raising funds to support Prospect United Methodist Church. It is hard work but many hands help to lighten the load. Not only do we rely on our core group members, we have a wonderful group of individuals who continually step up to help and make these events go smoothly.

Both dinners and the tea were our highest profit-raising events, and now the Breakfast with Santa has added to our bottom line.

Save The Dates, and pass the word along, for the following events planned for 2015:

- **May 2 and May 9:** Annual Renaissance Dinner;
- **May 16:** Pirate and Princess Breakfast/Brunch;
- **June 6:** Annual Relay for Life Walk — Bristol Eastern H.S.;
- **December 5:** Annual Victorian Christmas Tea; and
- **December 19:** Annual Breakfast With Santa.

■ **It's Never Too Late ... For Stewardship**

The end of the year becomes a hectic time for many people. Did you lay your stewardship pledge aside only to lose it in all of the holiday hubbub? Not to worry. You can still, as always, help support the mission of Prospect United Methodist Church by submitting your 2015 Pledge of Support. You don't need a form; you just need a willing attitude. Contact Carla Heister at church or by e-mail (carla.heister@yale.edu) to let her know at what level you wish to support our shared mission. To make it really easy, pick up an automatic bank transfer form from the church office and fill it out. Pledging to the General Fund is encouraged.

■ **ELECTRONIC GIVING?**

The term Electronic Giving encompasses a wide range of secure, automatic payment methods that can be used to make regular church offerings and other contributions without the need to write checks, carry cash or prepare envelopes.



Youth Corner

■ **Successful Pageant, Party, Held** ~Christa Zaldivar, Education Chair



Our Christmas Pageant, “Listen to the Angels,” was a wonderful production performed by 24 Sunday School children! We dedicated our performance to our beloved parishioner, Janice Moore, who passed away the morning of the pageant. We heard “the Greatest Story Ever Told” from the perspective of the angels in the Heavenly Realms. This musical, which contained sparkling songs and delightful dialogue, had the congregation laughing and smiling throughout. Thanks to all children, families, Sunday School teachers, and Music Director Heidi Flower for giving their time and talent to this year’s performance! Also, thanks to a generous donation from Susie Parker’s memorial fund, we purchased new costumes to be used for many years to come.

Our New Year’s Eve Family Celebration was a great success with 47 people attending! Children decorated “2015” hats, created New Year’s Wish Fairies, and made firework rings. We enjoyed tasty homemade macaroni and cheese,



accompanied by all our guests’ appetizers. Children and adults alike gathered together for The Chicken Dance and the Sasha Folk Dance from Russia! Everyone chose their own ice cream and toppings for some delicious ice cream sundaes. To top it all off, we received the “new year” at 6 p.m., with a rousing countdown and balloon drop, complete with noisemakers, bells, and a recording of Auld Lang Syne!

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